

Hunting Island Lighthouse Complex
Hunting Island State Park
Hunting Island
Beaufort County
South Carolina

HABS No. SC-385

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REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HUNTING ISLAND LIGHTHOUSE COMPLEX

HABS No. SC-385

LOCATION: Hunting Island State Park, Hunting Island, Beaufort
County. Latitude 32° 22'-30" N
Longitude - 80° 26'-20" W

PRESENT OWNER: S. C. Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism

STATEMENT OF

SIGNIFICANCE: The lighthouse served as a much needed navigational aid to guide ships through the shoals and sandbars of Port Royal Sound when Beaufort was a thriving seaport during the years of phosphate production in that area.

I. LIGHTHOUSE

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. In 1859 a brick lighthouse was built on Hunting Island. However, by the late 1860's the structure was undermined by beach erosion and was destroyed. In 1875, under the direction of the U. S. Coast Guard, a new lighthouse, made of cast iron plates, was constructed about one fourth mile from the shore. However, in 1889, beach erosion cut off the Northern shore of the island and necessitated the relocation of the lighthouse to its present location, one and one half miles south of the old site. On October 1, 1889, the lighthouse was placed in operation and was functional until operations were discontinued on June 16, 1933.

B. Architect: George M. Elliot, Major of Engineers, U.S.A.
Engineering Secretary of the L.H. Board; Paul J. Felix,
Chief Draughtsman.

Pelz

C. Sources of Information

1. Documentation: From information received from the files of United States Coast Guard Service.
2. Old Views: Photographs showing the lighthouse and the keeper's dwelling.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. Statistics

1. Size of lens: Second order (focal distance 700 mm.)
2. Illuminant: Incandescent oil vapor.
3. Candlepower, 100,000 candles.
4. Light above measured high water: 133 feet
5. Miles seen: 18 miles

B. Description

1. The exterior is constructed of cast iron plates designed with the possibility of disassembly and relocation. The staircase is iron with cement landings. There are 181 steps from top to bottom.

11. SUPPORT BUILDINGS AND FACILITIES

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History.

1. By March 22, 1890, the lighthouse keeper's dwelling, storage buildings and the oil house were moved from their old site and re-erected. At this time a tram road and a loading dock was constructed out from the shore for the transportation of the barrels of oil for the light. In c.1930 the keeper's dwelling was completely destroyed by fire. The storage buildings are now used for the storage of maintenance supplies and temporary living quarters for park personnel. The oil house is presently used as a park office. An original white picket fence surrounds the complex.

B. Alterations and Additions.

1. The window on the right side of the eastern most storage building was replaced with two double hung sash windows in the 1960's. The privy on the back of the building was not part of the original construction and was added at a later date. In 1973, under the jurisdiction of the History Section of the South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism this building was stabilized on the exterior and paneling was put up on the interior. In addition, shelving and bins were added for the storage of concession items. The

western most storage building remains in its original condition with the exception of indoor plumbing facilities that were added in place of the privys. The oil house has had two window openings cut into the right and left sides.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

I. Storage Buildings

A. General Statement

1. Architectural Character. The storage buildings are excellent examples of Gothic Revival architecture. The keeper's dwelling that burned was a three story house similar in construction and appearance as the storage buildings.

B. Description of Exterior

1. Foundation: Brick, common bond.
2. Wall construction and color: Vertical siding with a wooden rib between the joints as a sealer. Painted white.
3. Framing: Large wood members secured with pins and mortise-tenon joints.
4. Openings, doors and windows: Two four panel doors at the front. Two windows; one at each side, hinged and double panes.
5. Roof: original roof, probably slate, now shingles.
6. Gables: scalloped with pendants.

C. Description of Interior

1. Walls: Rough finished exposed framing.
2. Floor Plan: Two rooms, no door.

II. Oil House

A. General Statement

1. Architectural Character: Simple, functional structure with no ornamentation.
- B. Description of Exterior
1. Walls and Foundation: Brick
 2. Openings: One steel door, vents and drains for fuel oil.
- C. Description of Interior
1. One room, cement floor.

Edited by:
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